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PEOPLE OF THE WEEK

STAT

WHY LBJ CHOSE HELMS TO RUN THE CIA

In a business which makes anonymity a virtue, Richard McGarrah Helms, the new Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, has the dual advantage of being not widely known outside the CIA and widely known within it as a tough pro.

This was at least part of the answer to questions which followed his appointment to succeed Vice Adm. William F. Raborn, Jr., in the \$35,000-a-year intelligence job. Among questions were: Why did Mr. Helms get the job? Will his appointment help silence Senate critics who feel that CIA operations should be under closer surveillance?

Here's the way one highly placed Washington source appraises the new Director—and answers the questions:

"The President wanted someone really accepted by the professionals in State, Defense and by important Senators. That's Helms. The President also wanted to prove there was no need for Senate committees to peer over the shoulders of a CIA chief who wasn't quite sure of what was going on in his own agency. CIA people are clannish, resent outsiders. It's difficult for any outsider to know what's really going on in the CIA. Now the President has cut off this Senate complaint."

There was speculation in some circles that one aim of the appointment of Mr. Helms was to attempt to placate Senator



—USN&WR Photo

Mr. Helms. His appointment was expected to please Government professionals.

J. W. Fulbright, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Mr. Fulbright has been pressing to have his Committee represented in the Senate watchdog group which is briefed on CIA activities.

Those activities, which extend from worldwide intelligence gathering to cloak-and-dagger operations, have caused

bitter controversy and charges that CIA should be held in closer check.

After hearing Mr. Helms pledge that the CIA will devote itself to intelligence work and leave policy making to others, the Senate Armed Services Committee confirmed him on June 23.

What's he like? An associate describes him this way—

"He's tough, dedicated, and he comes from the operational side. This is important. CIA in effect has two departments: intelligence evaluation and operations. It's the operational side that gets in more trouble. Helms knows operations inside out. He's the first guy to come up through the CIA. There will be fewer mistakes. His creed? Never another Pearl Harbor."

Mr. Helms is a native of Saint Davids, Pa., a 1935 graduate of Williams College, a Phi Beta Kappa. He was a United Press correspondent in his first job after college, later was advertising manager for "The Indianapolis Times."

After wartime service in the Office of Strategic Services, Mr. Helms stayed in the intelligence field and became Deputy Director of the CIA in 1947.

"All told," said Mr. Helms, "I think we have done a fine job over the years." He declined to indicate what changes, if any, he has in mind for the Agency. But, given the nature of CIA's vast network of activities, changes could well occur without fanfare or announcement.